

# THE WELCOMING STANDARD

## *Defining the Core of a Welcoming Community*

The Welcoming Standard captures what is essential to a welcoming community. Developed in collaboration with local governments, advocates, and diverse experts, and with input from the public at large, the Standard provides a comprehensive roadmap for immigrant inclusion.

## THE FRAMEWORK



GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP



EQUITABLE ACCESS



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT



CONNECTED COMMUNITIES



EDUCATION



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



SAFE COMMUNITIES

# THE REQUIREMENTS

---

In each area of the Framework, the Standard sets out smart local policies, programs, processes, and partnerships that are the building blocks of welcoming communities. The following summarize the requirements in the Welcoming Standard. The technical criteria for becoming Certified Welcoming can be found at [certifiedwelcoming.org](https://certifiedwelcoming.org).

## 1 GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP

- Designate a unit and staff to coordinate immigrant inclusion.  
(CORE TO CERTIFIED WELCOMING)
- Partner across sectors, agencies, and jurisdictions.  
(CORE FOR CERTIFIED WELCOMING)
- Share information on community resources and government services with immigrant residents. (CORE FOR CERTIFIED WELCOMING)
- Plan for community-wide immigrant inclusion. Implement the plan in collaboration with diverse stakeholders, and maintain the plan in consultation with the immigrant community. (CORE FOR CERTIFIED WELCOMING)
- Build the capacity of community based organizations working with immigrants.
- Advance equity, diversity, and inclusion in hiring and employee retention.
- Advance equity, diversity, and inclusion in sourcing and contracting.



## 2 EQUITABLE ACCESS

- Prevent policies that discriminate against immigrants because they are immigrants. Prevent policies that discriminate against immigrants because of other aspects of their identity, like religion, race, or ability.  
(CORE FOR CERTIFIED WELCOMING)
- Pursue language access across programs and services and train staff on language access. (CORE FOR CERTIFIED WELCOMING)
- Regularly determine barriers to access for immigrants and work in partnership to address those barriers. (CORE FOR CERTIFIED WELCOMING)
- Advance equitable access to healthcare for immigrants.
- Advance equitable access to housing for immigrants.
- Advance equitable access to transportation for immigrants.
- Advance equitable access to the justice system, legal services, and mediation for immigrants.
- Adopt a comprehensive language access policy.



3

## **CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**



- Develop immigrant knowledge of local government workings and support immigrant participation in democratic spaces. (CORE FOR CERTIFIED WELCOMING)
- Support naturalization. (CORE FOR CERTIFIED WELCOMING)
- Advance access to voting for eligible immigrants.
- Engage immigrants in community service.
- Address fraudulent immigration services.



4

## **CONNECTED COMMUNITIES**

- Build relationships, support interactions, and promote communication between immigrants and longer-term residents. (CORE FOR CERTIFIED WELCOMING)
- Promote a welcoming culture through institutional communications. (CORE FOR CERTIFIED WELCOMING)



7

## **EDUCATION**

- Welcome and engage immigrant students and their parents in K-12 schools, and advance access to school programs and services. (CORE FOR CERTIFIED WELCOMING)
- Invest in adult education, career readiness, and access to technical and professional degree programs.

5

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**



- Assist immigrant job seekers with information, training, and networking. (CORE FOR CERTIFIED WELCOMING)
- Support immigrant entrepreneurs and business owners in starting, building, and growing their companies. (CORE FOR CERTIFIED WELCOMING)
- Engage local employers and chambers of commerce to create welcoming, equitable and safe work environments.
- Plan for inclusive economic development and integrate welcoming into existing economic development efforts.
- Build financial knowledge and skills in the immigrant community.
- Support immigrant workers through education on workplace rights and legal advice on workplace issues.

6

## **SAFE COMMUNITIES**



- Train public safety staff on working with diverse communities. (CORE FOR CERTIFIED WELCOMING)
- Build relationships and promote communication between law and code enforcement staff and the immigrant community. (CORE FOR CERTIFIED WELCOMING)
- Educate immigrants on their legal rights and responsibilities. (CORE FOR CERTIFIED WELCOMING)
- Set formal policies that build trust between immigrants and public safety services.

## THE STRATEGIES

---

How communities design and implement the requirements in the Welcoming Standard is as critical as the content. Four core strategies increase the impact and sustainability of immigrant inclusion efforts. These strategies should be applied to each of the requirements of the Standard.

- 1 Build connections between immigrants and longer-term residents.
- 2 Set goals, monitor impact, and adjust strategies as needed.
- 3 Design for equitable access.
- 4 Implement in partnership.

## CERTIFIED WELCOMING

---

The Welcoming Standard is the backbone of our new Certified Welcoming program. Certified Welcoming communities build a competitive advantage, and have opportunities to share their welcoming practices on regional, national, and global stages.

To earn the title of Certified Welcoming cities and counties must meet all the requirements designated as “Core for Certified Welcoming.” Once certified, cities and counties must demonstrate progress within a three year period on other requirements of the Welcoming Standard.

More on Certified Welcoming can be found at [certifiedwelcoming.org](https://certifiedwelcoming.org).